



INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date July 2006

PROJECT NAME Riverside Community Health Project

PROJECT LOCATION Benwell Library Basement
Atkinson Road
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NE4 8XS

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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Sector Youth Provision
Ages Under 12 years
Area West
Ward Benwell & Scotswood

Number of beneficiaries



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Riverside Community Health Project

Riverside Community Health Project offers a range of programmes, activities, discussions and events at the Riverside Centre, around the theme of improving people's health prospects. They work to enable residents to take action around common concerns, such as community safety, lack of income, involvement in planning and decision making processes. Riverside Community Health Project works with parents and their children under 12 years by acting with others to ensure appropriate service provision. Services for children include Children's Thoughts Group, Young Voices and Centre, and Outreach Activities.

For the purpose of this report I had the pleasure of meeting with, Adil, Keya, Shemol, Shihab, Azhar, Tarek, Shahinoor, Mushfiq, Sabiha and Ryhan, Gulsen, Mariam, Mayzaty, Syazwani, Serena, Wahid, Sofia, Jimnah, Afrina and Amena.

Children's Thoughts

The Children's Thoughts group meet every other Saturday. The age of those attending tends to be between 7 and 13 years. Shemol told me, **"I am team captain and Ryhan is Deputy."** Shihab continued, **"We had a vote about who would be team captain. Every kid had to choose. We couldn't vote for yourself."** Adil said, **"We chose the person we wanted to vote for."**

Shemol enthusiastically informed me about his role as team captain. **"I present to the team. We go to meetings and talk to the group about what we can do. Like on Thursday we went to talk to the Children's Fund to get some money. We did a presentation to them."** The group are eagerly waiting to hear if they have been successful.

Exhibition at the Discovery Museum

Shemol explained, **"The Discovery Museum came to us and asked if we would put an exhibition on about young people living in their community now."** He continued, **"Michelle asked for a vote, a show of hands. That's how we decided to do it."** Keya said, **"We think it's a good idea."**

The exhibition is going to include photographs with words. Ryhan said, **"We got disposable cameras to take photos of what is important to us and we put our own words on them."** Keya added, **"We put on why we took the picture and what it represents to you."**

Ryhan proudly stated, **"They said it will be the history of our future. They will keep our work in the archive and in the exhibition as well."**

Stop Bullying

The Children's Thoughts group are working very hard at their Stop Bullying campaign. Shemol said, **"Even though we are young we can stop bullying."** Adil told me, **"We went on a tour and we are trying to stop bullying."** Ryhan added, **"We have made posters, tee shirts and postcards."** Shemol explained the idea behind the postcards. **"We sent the post cards to the schools in the West End asking if we can go in and do a presentation."** Shahinoor said, **"The tee shirts are white with red sleeves. We got "STOP" on one sleeve and "BULLYING" on the other sleeve."**

Ryhan told me about another idea the group had. **"We wrote to the chocolate factories and asked them to put stop bullying on the wrappers. But they never wrote back."** Shemol added, **"We thought this was very rude."**

It was very obvious from my visits that everyone enjoyed attending the Children's Thoughts group. Keya said, **"The best thing about coming here is that we can say what we want. Dhina listens to what we have to say. This is our group."** Shahinoor agreed. He said, **"It's our group. Everyone's. We do things we want to do."**

Young Voices

The group told me that they meet every Thursday during term time at Canning Street Primary School. Shahinoor informed me that they meet for an hour after school and **"the group is open to anyone in year 3 to 6 and who fills in a form."**

The group made me feel very welcome and quickly began to tell me all about themselves. Sofia told me, **"We come here to have fun."** Amena added **"we do activities"** Gulsen continued, **"like we make Dream Catchers."** Ryhan said, **"We like to do quizzes and we get prizes."** Shahinoor also explained how he loves to, **"make flags and passports. Not real ones though."** Amena added, **"We all went to Saudi Arabia the other day. That was good. But in real life, we do go on trips to the beach as well."**

I asked the group how they decide on the activities they want to do. Wahid proudly told me, **"We just vote. We write things down on paper and then we vote."** Shahinoor added, **"We decide as a group what we like to do."** Keya said, **"Most of the time Dhina asks what we want to do."** Syazwani continued, **"If we have a good idea, we just ask and we get to do it."**

After my visit to the group I could see why all the children enjoyed attending. However, just in case I was left in any doubt Amena told me, **"It's good here cos you make friends."** Keya agreed. **"We feel welcomed here."**

The work of the Riverside Community Health Project, including the Children's Thoughts Group and the Young Voices Group have three distinct aims. Firstly, to make it easier for Black and Minority families to be more involved with schools and the education of the children, secondly to support families to find out about their rights, and thirdly, to increase the involvement of children and young people in service development. After meeting with the children and young people involved, I am very impressed at the work they are doing in trying to ensure

young people are aware of their rights and also at how Dhina's project works very hard to involve young people in decision making. I am really looking forward to seeing how these groups develop.

I would like to thank all the children and young people who helped me to write this evaluation and for their patience at my poor spelling! I therefore have no hesitation in recommending that Riverside Community Health Project receives Investing in Children Membership. Well Done.

Glenys Newby ,Project Worker, Investing in Children

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